

Littleover Community School



and Sixth Form Centre

16-19 Bursary Fund Policy

School Leader	Mr R. Archer
Link Governor	

Policy approved on (date):		04/09/2024	
By:	J. Wilding	Signed:	

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16-19 BURSARY FUND POLICY

Overview

This policy describes how the school will distribute the funds allocated by the government in a fair way to support students in undertaking Sixth Form study. The 16-19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help students to participate in and benefit from a place in 16 to 19 education or training. The 16-19 Bursary Fund targets support towards the most financially disadvantaged 16 to 19-year olds - those who most need help with the costs of staying on. Littleover Community School will determine the eligibility criteria for discretionary bursaries, and the frequency of and conditions for payments for all awards. The 16-19 Bursary will only be awarded to a student that is eligible and facing genuine financial barriers to participating. This policy will be reviewed and adapted each year to reflect any new guidance from DfE and also to reflect the levels of funding allocated.

The Bursary is to support students with the cost of transport to and from school, and educational books/equipment (this will include laptops for students who do not have access to a computer at home and educational visits/field work that are essential to the study of the course). The school may provide students who live a distance, for example more than 2 miles away, from the school with a bus pass that will allow them to travel to and from school, if funds allow. Other costs such as curriculum trips and course resources will be paid for directly by the school where possible or allocated to students if they provide evidence of the need and cost of items. As Enrichment is a part of the Year 12 'additional' curriculum, we will also consider helping students with the cost of enrichment options where funds allow – students will apply for enrichment funding differently as please contact the sixth form office.

Eligibility Criteria: all bursaries

Students will be considered for access to bursary funds based on the following criteria.

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2025 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2023-2024 academic year.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers') or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

These 2 groups of aged 19+ students can receive a discretionary bursary while they continue to attend education (in the case of a 19+ continuer, this must be the same programme they started before they turned 19), as long as their eligibility continues and their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation.

Students aged 19 or over are not eligible for bursaries for vulnerable groups.

Residency

Students must meet the residency criteria in [ESFA funding regulations](#) (1) for post-16 provision.

Accompanied asylum seeking children (under 18 with an adult relative or partner)

Accompanied asylum seeking children (those under 18 with an adult relative or partner) and those aged 18 and above are entitled to education, but not to public funds. As long as an accompanied asylum seeker has not had their application for asylum refused, in-kind student support such as books, equipment or a travel

pass can be provided. No cash payments can be given to an applicant who is an asylum seeker unless they are an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC).

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children do not receive cash support from the Home Office and are the responsibility of the local authority. They are treated as looked after children and are eligible for a bursary for vulnerable groups ('in care' group), where they have a financial need.

When these young people reach legal adulthood at age 18, immigration status will be considered. If the asylum claim is decided in their favour, they will receive the same support as a care leaver. As such, they continue to be eligible for a bursary as a student from a vulnerable group until they reach the upper age limit.

Where an asylum claim is not supported, the individual may not be able to stay legally in the UK. When asylum claims have been fully heard/the appeals process exhausted, an individual has no entitlement to public funds and bursary support will be withdrawn.

Types of Bursary

There are two types of Bursary available:

1. Bursaries of up to £1,200 for all young people in the following nominated vulnerable groups:

- Student is in or recently left local authority care
- Student gets Universal Credit because they're financially supporting themselves or financially supporting themselves and someone who is dependent on them and living with them such as a child or partner
- Student gets Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their name and Universal Credit
- Student gets Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their name and Universal Credit

Students may get the full amount if they have expenses and study full-time on a course of at least 30 weeks.

Applicants will need to bring supporting evidence.

- For students who are in care or a care leaver, written confirmation from the local authority that looks after them or provides their leaving care services
- For students getting Universal Credit, a copy of their Universal Credit award notice (they must be entitled to the benefits in their own right). The evidence must confirm that they can be in further education or training. If they're getting Universal Credit their institution will also need to see either a tenancy agreement in their name, a child benefit receipt, children's birth certificates or a utility bill.
- For students getting Universal Credit (UC) and Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments, a copy of the UC claim that confirms which group they've been placed in. They will also need to provide evidence that they're receiving Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

2. Discretionary bursaries to young people facing genuine financial difficulties which may affect their participation in education.

Acceptable reasons for Financial Support from The Discretionary Bursary

The level of discretionary bursary support provided will be dependent on the costs students can demonstrate they incur through their Sixth Form study. Examples of costs would include (but are not limited to)-

- Travel to and from school, if your journey is not walkable (eg. more than 2 miles or there is a genuine reason why a student cannot walk to school e.g. a disability).
- UCAS admin fee
- Books, materials and equipment needed for a particular course (such as for art or other practical subjects)
- The 50% cost of educational visits related to courses.

Application

Students with a family income of less than £21,000 can apply for a discretionary award on the form provided. These forms require details of costs that a student faces and of family income. The student's family is defined as the combined income of those people with whom the student usually lives (does not include any income that the student generates).

To best allocate funds, students will need to have submitted their application forms with supporting evidence by the end of September at the start of the school year. The school recognise that family and individual circumstances can change, therefore applications can be made at any point within the school year. Awards can be made if there is still funding available.

Assessment and evidence of entitlement

The application form will be assessed by the Finance Manager/Head of Post 16 and the level of payment decided. The application form requires certain proof of income and failure to provide this proof will usually result in the refusal of an award. The level of support offered will be dependent on the individual circumstances of each applicant and the amount that the school is allocated each year.

Payment of bursaries

Where possible, the school will pay directly for items and travel passes rather than paying students directly. If there is a need to pay a student directly then payments will be made by direct bank payment to the young person following the appropriate Derby City systems.

Students should return books and equipment at the end of their study programme to be used again by other students if these have been purchased 'in kind'. For example, if it is decided a graphical calculator is necessary for the student to complete their study programme, the school may purchase this with bursary funds. However, the student should return the equipment to the institution once they have completed their study programme so it can be re-used by another student unless the school feels that the equipment is not useable for future years.

Conditions of payment

Payment is conditional on good attendance including punctuality. Good attendance means that student's attendance is above 95%. All absences must be properly notified and authorised by the school. Monthly attendance will be reviewed on each occasion and if attendance for that month is 95% or above or overall attendance is at the expected standard then the attendance criteria has been met.

Known absences (e.g. medical appointments, University visits etc.) should be notified to the Sixth Form Administrator. Holidays during term time and prolonged medical absences will not be paid as the bursary is awarded to support participation in education.

Payment is also conditional of good approach to study. A good approach means that a student works consistently hard in class and endeavours to meet all independent study expectations and deadlines.

Behaviour in lessons, around the school and the local community in school hours are also conditions of payment and if concerns about a student's conduct are raised then bursary payments may be declined.

Where students have been absent for a period of 4 continuous weeks or more (excluding holidays, or if there is evidence that the student intends to return) and where students have made a decision to withdraw from a study programme, bursary payments will be withdrawn. In rare instances, the school can take money back from students if they have not spent it for the reasons it was awarded to them. This will be done by withdrawing some money from future payments to repay this money. In these cases, the school will consider fully the impact of such an action on the individual student before taking a final decision to do so.

Decisions

An appeal about any decision would be to the Headteacher and then to the governing body.

Audit

All application forms including the decision made will be kept for the appropriate period and an audit trail will be maintained on the finance system. A record of bursary applications and awards (including the number, value, purpose, whether awarded or not, and a brief justification for the decision) will be maintained. The application process, how the student was assessed, how they made the decision to award the specific amount of bursary and the funds that they have issued to the student will be documented.

Hard or scanned copies of documentation will be retained for 6 years (records can be kept electronically).

Examples of documentation include:

For the bursary for vulnerable groups:

- a copy of the funding claim sent to SBSS
- evidence showing that the student is eligible, for example, a letter from DWP or the local authority or a copy of the student's online Universal Credit statement
- evidence of payments received from the SBSS, for example bank statements and remittance advices
- evidence of payments made to the student

For the discretionary bursary:

- Evidence used to assess eligibility, such as a letter from DWP or evidence of household income, including any copies of online statements for Universal Credit.
- a copy of the student's individual assessment of actual financial need
- ~~receipts for in-kind purchases made, for example, bus pass, lunch receipts or book receipts~~

Recycling bursaries for vulnerable groups funding

If unused funding for bursaries for vulnerable groups during the academic year accrues. For example, if a student leaves early after only receiving part of their bursary or the school does not pay the full amount to a student because they did not meet the agreed conditions. These funds will be recycled and used to offset funding claims for other eligible students until 30 April 2024.

For example, rather than claiming £1,200 for a newly identified student who meets the criteria for a bursary for vulnerable groups, the school may already have £700 that they claimed for a student who has now left. The school will recycle the £700 for the new student, claiming only £500 from the SBSS to give them the total amount of funding they need.

If the school holds enough funds to cover the costs of a bursary for vulnerable groups eligible student in full, the school will submit a funding claim form to the SBSS showing a zero amount.

The school will add any funding for bursaries for vulnerable groups they have claimed, but no longer need, for eligible students to their discretionary bursary allocation from 1 May 2024.

Administration contribution

The school will use up to 5% of the bursary allocation for administrative costs.

Contingency Fund

The school will set aside 10% of the allocated fund as a contingency to cater for potential late applicants or increased course costs etc.

Managing discretionary bursary underspends

In the first instance unspent bursary funds will be pooled, we will then look to use this on funding additional activities especially around HE, purchasing literature and study resources for the bursary student cohort.

Any money left over we then consider if there is the capacity to top slice 5% to school funds for admin but only if the pot is not spent. If there are still funds available after an administration contribution, the school will carry unspent bursary funds over to the next academic year. Any funds that are carried forward will be used to support the next cohort of discretionary bursary students.

Data Protection

For the purposes of the Data Protection Act (DPA), the Department for Education is the data controller for any personal data that is given to the school. This personal data will be processed in accordance with the DPA, only used for the purpose(s) for which it is supplied to us and only shared with third parties where it is necessary for us to do so and the law allows it.

Reference:

Residency Criteria (1) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>

Further information on the bursary scheme can be found at -

<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>